

Amendments to the Claims:

The following listing of claims replaces all prior listings, and all prior versions, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (cancelled)

2. (Currently amended) A friction stir welding method according to claim 452,

wherein the friction stir welding of the abutting portion is carried out under a condition where a backing plate is located adjacent said ~~abutted~~ abutting portion, and

wherein the friction stir welding of the abutting portion is carried out to form substantially a flat face of the first and second members adjacent said backing plate.

3. (currently amended) A friction stir welding method according to claim 452,

wherein said welding said fourth plate welds said fourth plate to a connection portion of said second plate and said third plate of at least one of the first and second members.

4. (original) A friction stir welding method according to claim 3, wherein the welding of said fourth plate and said connection portion of said second plate and said third plate is carried out by friction stir welding.

5. (currently amended) A friction stir welding method according to claim 3, wherein:

each of said first and second members has a recessed portion which opens directing toward an outer side in a thickness direction of said members and said end portion side of said second plate toward a connection portion of said second plate and said third plate;

after the friction stir welding of the abutting portion, overlapping respective end portions of said fourth plate to said respective recessed portions; and

thereafter, welding the respective end portions of said fourth plate to said respective first and second members.

6. (currently amended) A friction stir welding method according to claim 5, wherein the ~~welding of said fourth plate and said connection portion is carried out~~ are welded by friction stir welding.

7. (original) A friction stir welding method according to claim 6, wherein:

said fourth plate is positioned to overlap said recessed portion and abut said end portion of said fourth plate to an end portion of said second plate of said first member, providing another abutted portion; and

the friction stir welding of the fourth plate and the connection portion is carried out at said another abutted portion.

8. (original) A friction stir welding method according to claim 6, wherein:

said third plate of said first member is substantially orthogonal to said first plate of said first member; and

the friction stir welding of said fourth plate and said connection portion is carried out by positioning said rotary tool in a range of an extension line in a thickness of said third plate.

9. (original) A friction stir welding method according to claim 6, wherein the friction stir welding of said fourth plate to said third plate is carried out using said rotary tool.

10. (original) A friction stir welding method according to claim 3, wherein the friction stir welding of said fourth plate to said third plate is carried out using said rotary tool.

11. - 14. (cancelled)

15. (currently amended) A manufacturing method of a structure body according to claim ~~44~~53,

wherein the friction stir welding of the abutting portion is carried out under a condition where a backing plate is located adjacent said ~~abutted~~ abutting portion, and

wherein the friction stir welding of the abutting portion is carried out to form substantially a flat face of said first and second members adjacent said backing plate.

16. (cancelled)

17. (currently amended) A manufacturing method of a vehicle structure body according to claim ~~46~~54,

wherein the friction stir welding of the abutting portion is carried out under a condition where a backing plate is located adjacent said ~~abutted~~ abutting portion, and

wherein the friction stir welding of the abutting portion is carried out to form substantially a flat face of said first and second members adjacent said backing plate.

18. (original) Vehicle structure body formed by the manufacturing method of claim 17.

19. (currently amended) Vehicle structure body formed by the manufacturing method of claim ~~54~~ 46.

20. (currently amended) Structure body formed by the manufacturing method of claim ~~53~~ 44.

21. - 51. (cancelled)

52. (new) A friction stir welding method, comprising the steps of:  
preparing a first member and a second member, each of said first member and said second member having a first plate, a second plate which is arranged substantially in parallel to said first plate, and a third plate connecting a midway of an end part of said first plate to an end part of said second plate;

wherein said end part of said first plate of said first member projects beyond said end part of said second plate of said first member, and said end part of said first plate of said second member projects beyond said end part of said second plate of said second member, thereby forming a space between said end part of said second plate of said first member and said end part of said second plate of said second member when said first and second members abut each other;

abutting said end part of said first plate of said first member and said end part of said first plate of said second member, thereby providing an abutting portion, wherein at said abutting portion said end part of said first plate of said first member abuts said end part of said first plate of said second member;

inserting a rotary tool from said space formed between said end part of said second plate of said first member and said end part of said second plate of said second member to said abutting portion from an outer side of said second plate of said first member and an outer side of said second plate of said second member;

carrying out friction stir welding of said abutting portion, to form substantially flat a face of said abutting portion formed between said end part

of said first plate of said first member and said end part of said first plate of said second member;

pulling out said rotary tool to an outer side of said second plate of said first member and to an outer side of said second plate of said second member, from said space formed between said end part of said second plate of said first member and said end part of said second plate of said second member;

arranging a fourth plate between said end part of said second plate of said first member and said end part of said second plate of said second member, at said space formed between said end part of said second plate of said first member and said end part of said second plate of said second member; and

carrying out friction stir welding, using said rotary tool, of said fourth plate to said end part of said second plate of said first member and said end part of said second plate of said second member from said outer side of said second plate of said first member and said outer side of said second plate of said second member,

one end part of said fourth plate and said end part of said second plate of said first member, and another end part of said fourth plate and said end part of said second plate of said second member, being welded by the friction stir welding.

53. (new) A friction stir welding method, comprising the steps of:

preparing a first member and a second member, each of said first member and said second member having a first plate, a second plate which is arranged substantially in parallel to said first plate, and a third plate

connecting a midway of an end part of said first plate to an end part of said second plate;

wherein said end part of said first plate of said first member projects beyond said end part of said second plate of said first member, and said end part of said first plate of said second member projects beyond said end part of said second plate of said second member, thereby forming a space between said end part of said second plate of said first member and said end part of said second plate of said second member when the first and second members abut each other;

abutting said end part of said first plate of said first member and said end part of said first plate of said second member, thereby providing an abutting portion, wherein at said abutting portion said end part of said first plate of said first member abuts said end part of said first plate of said second member;

inserting a rotary tool from said space formed between said end part of said second plate of said first member and said end part of said second plate of said second member to said abutting portion from an outer side of said second plate of said first member and an outer side of said second plate of said second member;

carrying out a friction stir welding of said abutting portion, to form substantially flat a face of said abutting portion formed between said end part of said first plate of said first member and said end part of said first plate of said second member;

pulling out said rotary tool to an outer side of said second plate of said first member and to an outer side of said second plate of said second

member, from said space formed between said end part of said second plate of said first member and said end part of said second plate of said second member;

arranging a fourth plate between said end part of said second plate of said first member and said end part said second plate of said second member and further at said space formed between said end part of said second plate of said first member and said end part of said second plate of said second member; and

carrying out friction stir welding using said rotary tool of said fourth plate to said end part of said second plate of said first member and said end part of said first plate of said second member from said outer side of said second plate of said first member and said outer side of said second plate of said second member, one end part of said fourth plate and said end part of said second plate of said first member and another end part of said fourth plate and said end part of said second plate of said second member being welded by the friction stir welding, thereby forming an obtained structure; and

manufacturing a structure body by positioning said first plate of said first member and said first plate of said second member of said obtained structure at an outer face of the structure body.

54. (new) A manufacturing method of a vehicle structure body, comprising the steps of:

preparing a first member and a second member, each of said first member and said second member having a first plate, a second plate which is arranged substantially in parallel to said first plate, and a third plate



connecting a midway of an end part of said first plate to an end part of said second plate;

wherein said end part of said first plate of said first member projects beyond said end part of said second plate of said first member, and said end part of said first plate of said second member projects beyond said end part of said second plate of said second member, thereby forming a space between said end part of said second plate of said first member and said end part of said second plate of said second member;

abutting said end part of said first plate of said first member and said end part of said first plate of said second member, thereby providing an abutting portion, wherein at said abutting portion said end part of said first plate of said first member abuts said end part of said first plate of said second member;

inserting a rotary tool from said space formed between said end part of said second plate of said first member and said end part of said second plate of said second member to said abutting portion from an outer side of said second plate of said first member and an outer side of said second plate of said second member;

carrying out a friction stir welding of said abutting portion, to form substantially flat a face of said abutting portion formed between said end part of said first plate of said first member and said end part of said first plate of said second member;

pulling out said rotary tool to an outer side of said second plate of said first member and to an outer side of said second plate of said second member, from said space formed between said end part of said second plate

of said first member and said end part of said second plate of said second member;

arranging a fourth plate between said end part of said second plate of said first member and said end part of said second plate of said second member and further at said space formed between said end part of said second plate of said first member and said end part of said second plate of said second member; and

carrying out a friction stir welding, using said rotary tool, of said fourth plate to said end part of said second plate of said first member and to said end part of said second plate of said second member from said outer side of said second plate of said second member and from said outer side of said second plate of said first member, thereby one end part of said fourth plate and said end part of said second plate of said first member and another end part of said fourth plate and said end part of said second plate of said second member are welded by friction stir welding, thereby forming an obtained structure; and

manufacturing the vehicle structure body by positioning the first plate of said first member and said first plate of said second member of said obtained structure at an outer face of the vehicle structure body.

55. (new) A friction stir welding method according to claim 52, wherein the fourth plate includes a vertical portion extending toward the first plates of the first and second members when the fourth plate is positioned bridging the second plates of the first and second members, the fourth plate being T-shaped.